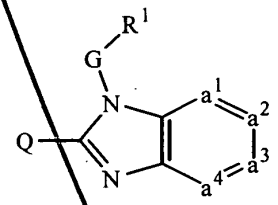
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. *(currently amended)* A compound of formula



(I)

a prodrug, N-oxide, addition salt, quaternary amine, metal complex or stereochemically isomeric form thereof wherein

$-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ represents a bivalent radical of formula

-CH=CH-CH=CH- (a-1);

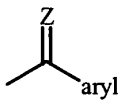
-N=CH-CH=CH- (a-2);

-CH=N-CH=CH- (a-3);

-CH=CH-N=CH- (a-4); or

-CH=CH-CH=N- (a-5);

wherein each hydrogen atom in the radicals (a-1), (a-2), (a-3), (a-4) and (a-5) may optionally be replaced by halo, C_{1-6}alkyl, nitro, amino, hydroxy, C_{1-6}alkyloxy, polyhaloC_{1-6}alkyl, carboxyl, aminoC_{1-6}alkyl, mono- or di(C_{1-4}alkyl)aminoC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkyloxycarbonyl, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkyl, or a radical of formula

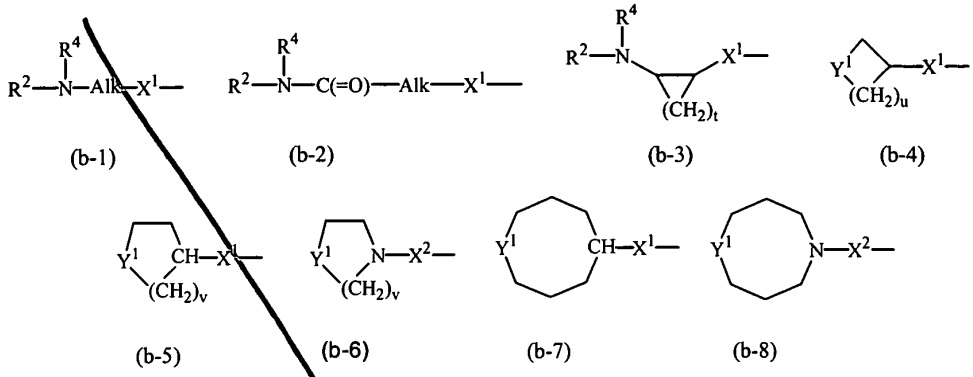


wherein =Z is =O, =CH-C(=O)-$NR^{5a}R^{5b}$, $=CH_2$, =CH-C_{1-6}alkyl, =N-OH or =N-O-C_{1-6}alkyl;

Q is a radical of formula

C1

R1 Cont



wherein Alk is C_{1-6}alkanediyl;

Y^1 is a bivalent radical of formula $-NR^2-$ or $-CH(NR^2R^4)-$;

X^1 is NR^4, S, S(=O), $S(=O)_2$, O, CH_2, C(=O), $C(=CH_2)$, CH(OH), $CH(CH_3)$, $CH(OCH_3)$, $CH(SCH_3)$, $CH(NR^{5a}R^{5b})$, CH_2-NR^4 or NR^4-CH_2;

X^2 is a direct bond, CH_2, C(=O), NR^4, C_{1-4}alkyl-NR^4, NR^4-C_{1-4}alkyl;

t is 2, 3, 4 or 5;

u is 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5;

v is 2 or 3; and

whereby each hydrogen atom in Alk and the carbocycles and the heterocycles defined in radicals (b-3), (b-4), (b-5), (b-6), (b-7) and (b-8) may optionally be replaced by R^3; with the proviso that when R^3 is hydroxy or C_{1-6}alkyloxy, then R^3 can not replace a hydrogen atom in the α position relative to a nitrogen atom;

G is C_{1-10}alkanediyl substituted with one or more hydroxy, C_{1-6}alkyloxy, arylC_{1-6}alkyloxy, C_{1-6}alkylthio, arylC_{1-6}alkylthio, $HO(-CH_2-CH_2-O)_n-$, C_{1-6}alkyloxy $(-CH_2-CH_2-O)_n-$ or arylC_{1-6}alkyloxy$(-CH_2-CH_2-O)_n-$;

R^1 is a monocyclic heterocycle or aryl; said heterocycle being selected from piperidinyl, piperazinyl, pyridyl, pyrazinyl, pyridazinyl, pyrimidinyl, furanyl, tetrahydrofuranyl, thienyl, pyrrolyl, thiazolyl, oxazolyl, imidazolyl, isothiazolyl, pyrazolyl, isoxazolyl, oxadiazolyl; and each heterocycle may optionally be substituted with 1 or where possible more~~, such as 2, 3 or 4,~~ substituents selected from halo, hydroxy, amino, cyano, carboxy, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkyloxy, C_{1-6}alkylthio,

C'

D' Cont

C_{1-6}alkyloxyC_{1-6}alkyl, aryl, arylC_{1-6}alkyl, arylC_{1-6}alkyloxy, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkyl, mono- or di(C_{1-6}alkyl)amino, mono-or di(C_{1-6}alkyl)aminoC_{1-6}alkyl, polyhaloC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkylcarbonylamino, C_{1-6}alkyl-SO_2-NR^{5c}-, aryl-SO_2-NR^{5c}-, C_{1-6}alkyloxycarbonyl, -C(=O)-$NR^{5c}R^{5d}$, HO(-CH_2-CH_2-O)$_n$-, halo(-CH_2-CH_2-O)$_n$-, C_{1-6}alkyloxy(-CH_2-CH_2-O)$_n$-, arylC_{1-6}alkyloxy(-CH_2-CH_2-O)$_n$- and mono- or di(C_{1-6}alkyl)amino (-CH_2-CH_2-O)$_n$;

each n independently is 1, 2, 3 or 4;

R^2 is hydrogen, formyl, C_{1-6}alkylcarbonyl, Hetcarbonyl, pyrrolidinyl, piperidinyl, homopiperidinyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl substituted with $N(R^6)_2$, or C_{1-10}alkyl substituted with $N(R^6)_2$ and optionally with a second, third or fourth substituent selected from amino, hydroxy, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, C_{2-5}alkanediyl, piperidinyl, mono-or di(C_{1-6}alkyl)amino, C_{1-6}alkyloxycarbonylamino, aryl and aryloxy;

R^3 is hydrogen, hydroxy, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkyloxy, arylC_{1-6}alkyl or arylC_{1-6}alkyloxy;

R^4 is hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl or arylC_{1-6}alkyl;

R^{5a}, R^{5b}, R^{5c} and R^{5d} each independently are hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl; or

R^{5a} and R^{5b}, or R^{5c} and R^{5d} taken together form a bivalent radical of formula -$(CH_2)_s$- wherein s is 4 or 5;

R^6 is hydrogen, C_{1-4}alkyl, formyl, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkylcarbonyl or C_{1-6}alkyloxycarbonyl;

aryl is phenyl or phenyl substituted with 1 or more~~, such as 2, 3 or 4,~~ substituents selected from halo, hydroxy, C_{1-6}alkyl, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkyl, polyhaloC_{1-6}alkyl, and C_{1-6}alkyloxy; **and**

Het is pyridyl, pyrimidinyl, pyrazinyl, **or** pyridazinyl.

2. *(previously amended)* A compound according to claim 1, wherein -a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4- is a radical of formula (a-1) or (a-2).

C'

3. *(previously amended)* A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^1 is phenyl optionally substituted with halo, C_{1-6}alkyl or C_{1-4}alkyloxy; or pyridyl optionally substituted with 1 or more substituents selected from arylC_{1-6}alkyloxy, C_{1-6}alkyloxyC_{1-6}alkyl, aryl, mono-or di(C_{1-6}alkyl)amino, C(=O)-$NR^{5c}R^{5d}$, halo or C_{1-6}alkyl.

D' Cont

4. *(previously amended)* A compound according to claim 1, wherein G is C_{1-4}alkanediyl substituted with hydroxy, C_{1-6}alkyloxy, $HO(-CH_2-CH_2-O)_n-$, C_{1-6}alkyloxy$(-CH_2-CH_2-O)_n-$ or arylC_{1-6}alkyloxy$(-CH_2-CH_2-O)_n-$.

5. *(previously amended)* A compound according to claim 1, wherein Q is a radical of formula (b-5) wherein v is 2 and Y^1 is $-NR^2-$.

6. *(previously amended)* A compound according to claim 1, wherein X^1 is NH or CH_2.

7. *(previously amended)* A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^2 is hydrogen or C_{1-10}alkyl substituted with NHR^6 wherein R^6 is hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyloxycarbonyl.

8. *(original)* A compound according to claim 1, wherein the compound is [(A),(S)]-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(6-bromo-2-pyridinyl)ethoxymethyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; [(A),(S)]-N-[1-(2-aminopropyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[ethoxy(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine (compound 75); (±)-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(2-methoxyethoxy)(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-6-chloro-1-[(2-methoxyethoxy)(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-4-methyl-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine trihydrochloride trihydrate; [(A),(R)]-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[ethoxy(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine monohydrate; (±)-N-[1-(2-

aminopropyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[ethoxy(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; [(A)(S)]-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[ethoxy(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine monohydrate; (±)-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[ethoxy(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; [(A),(R)]-N-[1-(2-aminopropyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[ethoxy(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine monohydrate; (±)-N-[1-(2-aminoethyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(6-bromo-2-pyridinyl)ethoxymethyl]-2-benzimidazol-2-amine; (±)-N-[1-(2-aminoethyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(2-ethoxyethoxy)(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; [(B),(S)] N-[1-(2-aminopropyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[ethoxy(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine monohydrate; (±)-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-3-[(2-methoxyethoxy)(6-methyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-7-methyl-3H-imidazo[4,5-b]pyridin-2-amine; (±)-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(2-ethoxyethoxy)(6-phenyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; (±)-N-[1-(2-aminoethyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(2-methoxyethoxy)(6-metyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; (±)-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(6-bromo-2-pyridinyl)ethoxymethyl]-4-methyl-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine monohydrate; [(A),(R)]-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(6-bromo-2-pyridinyl)ethoxymethyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; (±)-N-[1-(2-amino-3-methylbutyl)-4-piperidinyl]-1-[(6-bromo-2-pyridinyl)ethoxymethyl]-1H-benzimidazol-2-amine; a prodrug, N-oxide, addition salt, quaternary amine, metal complex or stereochemically isomeric form thereof.

9. *(currently amended)* A method of ~~using as a medicine~~ **treating a viral infection, comprising the step of administering a therapeutically effective amount of** a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8.

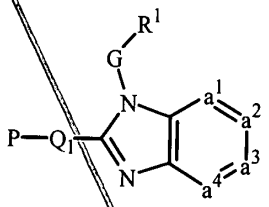
C'

10. *(previously amended)* A pharmaceutical composition, comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and as active ingredient a therapeutically effective amount of a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8.

D' cont

11. *(previously amended)* A process of preparing a composition as claimed in claim 10, comprising the step of intimately mixing said carrier with said compound.

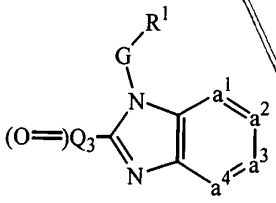
12. *(original)* An intermediate of formula



(IV)

with R^1, G and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, P being a protective group, and Q_1 being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that it is devoided of the R^2 or R^6 substituent.

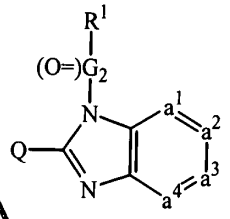
13. *(original)* An intermediate of formula



(IX)

with R^1, G and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $(O=)Q_3$ being a carbonyl derivative of Q, said Q being defined according to claim 1, provided that it is devoided of the $-NR^2R^4$ or $-NR^2-$ substituent.

14. *(original)* An intermediate of formula

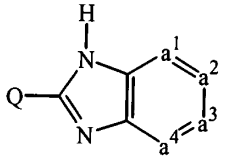


(XXII)

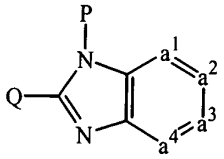
with R^1, Q and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $(O=)G_2$ being a carbonyl derivative of G, said G being defined according to claim 1.

15. *(currently amended)* A process of preparing a compound as claimed in claim 1, comprising at least one step selected from the group consisting of:

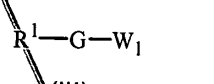
a) reacting an intermediate of formula (II-a) or (II-b) with an intermediate of formula (III)



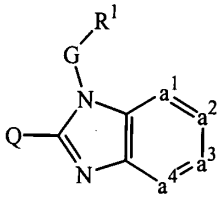
(II-a)



(II-b)



(III)



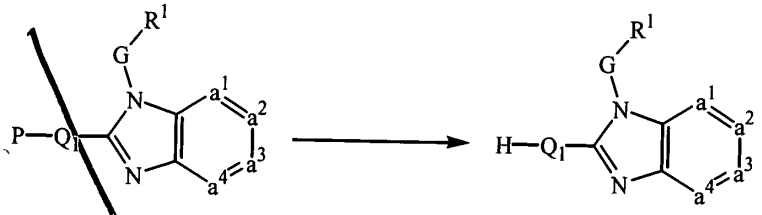
(I')

with R^1, G, Q and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and W_1 being a ~~suitable~~ leaving group, in the presence of a ~~suitable~~ base and in a ~~suitable~~ reaction-inert solvent;

b) deprotecting an intermediate of formula (IV)

C1

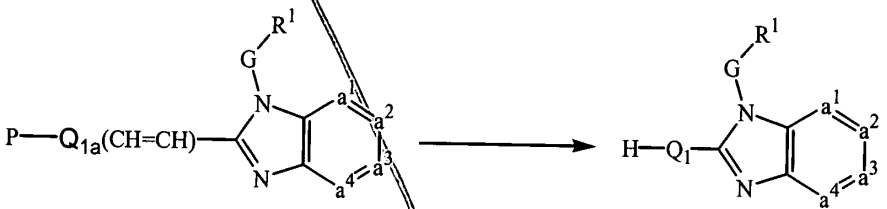
D1 Cont



(IV) (I-a)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, H-Q_1 being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that R^2 or at least one R^6 substituent is hydrogen, and P being a protective group;

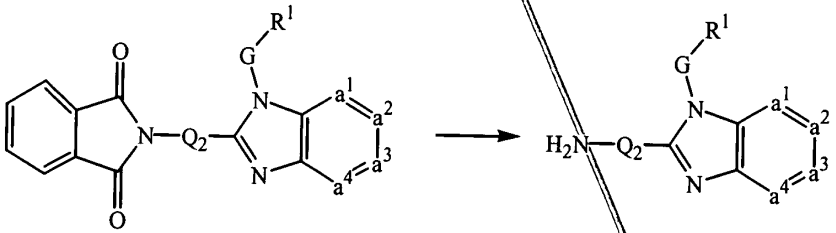
c) deprotecting and reducing an intermediate of formula (IV-a)



(IV-a) (I-a)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, H-Q_1 being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that R^2 or at least one R^6 substituent is hydrogen, Q_{1a}(CH=CH) being defined as Q_1 provided that Q_1 comprises an unsaturated bond, and P being a protective group;

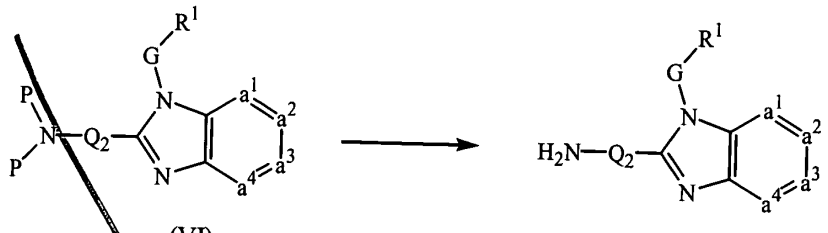
d) deprotecting an intermediate of formula (V)



(V) (I-a-1)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and H_2N-Q_2 being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that both R^6 substituents are hydrogen or R^2 and R^4 are both hydrogen;

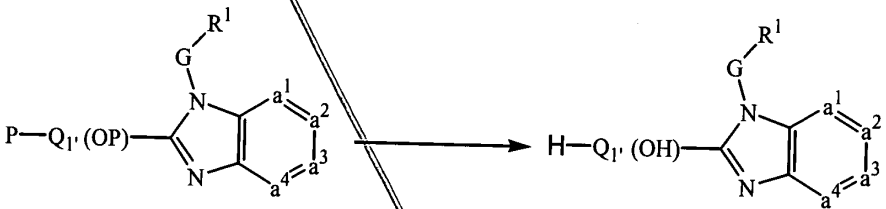
e) deprotecting an intermediate of formula (VI)



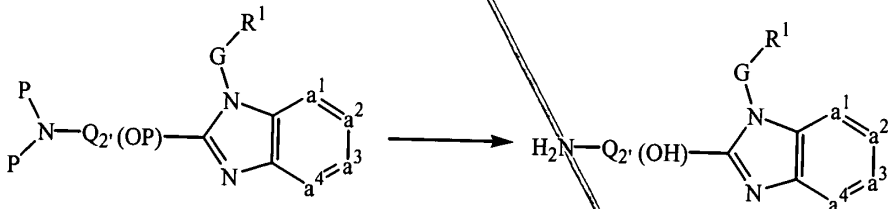
(VI) (I-a-1)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and H_2N-Q_2 being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that both R^6 substituents are hydrogen or R^2 and R^4 are both hydrogen, and P being a protective group;

f) deprotecting an intermediate of formula (VII) or (VIII)



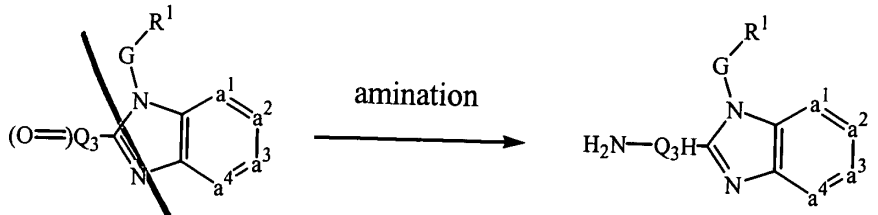
(VII) (I-a-2)



(VIII) (I-a-1-1)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, $H-Q_{1'}(OH)$ being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that R^2 or at least one R^6 substituent is hydrogen and provided that Q comprises a hydroxy moiety, $H_2N-Q_{2'}(OH)$ being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that both R^6 substituents are hydrogen or R^2 and R^4 are both hydrogen and provided that Q comprises a hydroxy moiety, and P being a protective group;

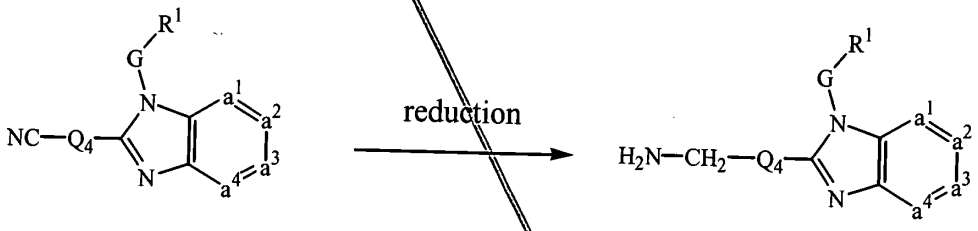
g) amination of an intermediate of formula (IX)



(IX) (I-a-1-2)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and H_2N-Q_3H being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that both R^6 substituents are hydrogen or R^2 and R^4 are both hydrogen, and the carbon adjacent to the nitrogen carrying the R^6, or R^2 and R^4 substituents contains at least one hydrogen, in the presence of ~~a suitable~~ **an** amination reagent;

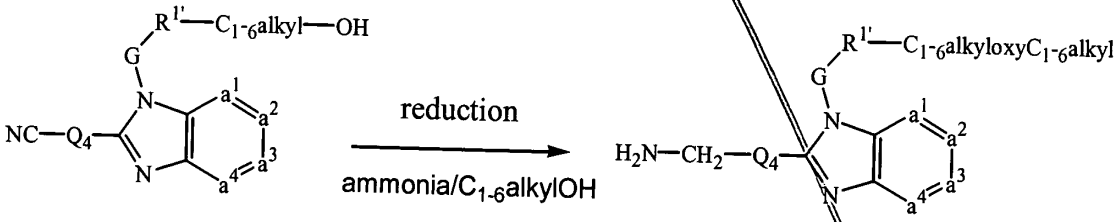
h) reducing an intermediate of formula (X)



(X) (I-a-1-3)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $H_2N-CH_2-Q_4$ being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that Q comprises a $-CH_2-NH_2$ moiety, in the presence of a ~~suitable~~ reducing agent;

i) reducing an intermediate of formula (X-a)

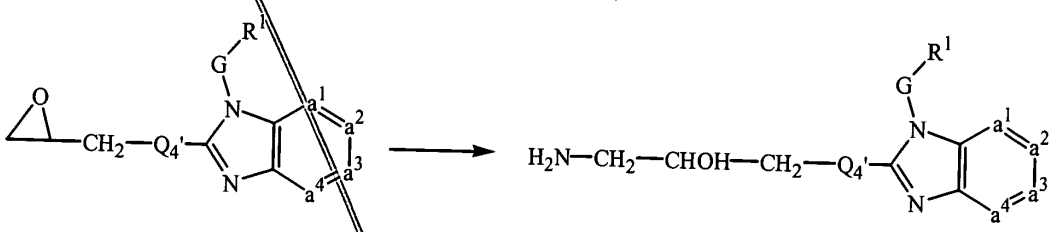


(X-a) (I-a-1-3-1)

with G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, $H_2N-CH_2-Q_4$ being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that Q comprises a $-CH_2-NH_2$ moiety, and $R^{1'}$

being defined as R^1 according to claim 1 provided that it comprises at least one substituent, in the presence of a ~~suitable~~ reducing agent and ~~suitable~~ solvent;

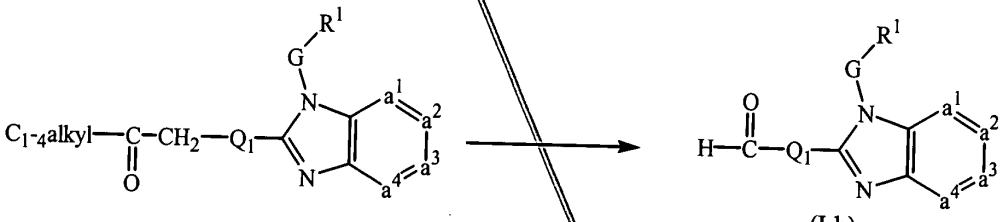
j) amination of an intermediate of formula (XI)



(XI) (I-a-1-3-2)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $H_2N-CH_2-CHOH-CH_2-Q_4$, being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that Q comprises a $CH_2-CHOH-CH_2-NH_2$ moiety, in the presence of ~~a suitable~~ an amination reagent;

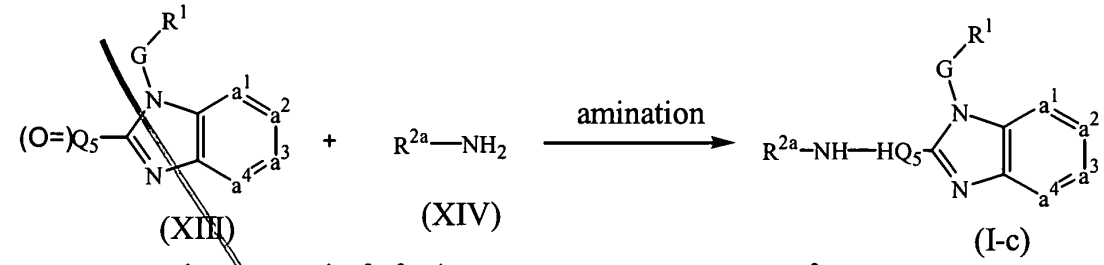
k) reacting an intermediate of formula (XII) with formic acid, formamide and ammonia



(XII) (I-b)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $H-C(=O)-Q_1$ being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that R^2 or at least one R^6 substituent is formyl;

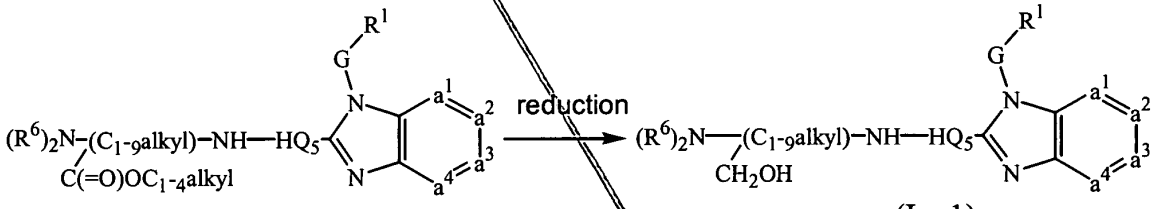
l) amination of an intermediate of formula (XIII) by reaction with an intermediate of formula (XIV)



(XIII) (XIV) (I-c)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and R^{2a}-NH-HQ_5 being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that R^2 is other than hydrogen and is represented by R^{2a}, R^4 is hydrogen, and the carbon atom adjacent to the nitrogen atom carrying the R^2 and R^4 substituents, carries also at least one hydrogen atom, in the presence of a ~~suitable~~ reducing agent;

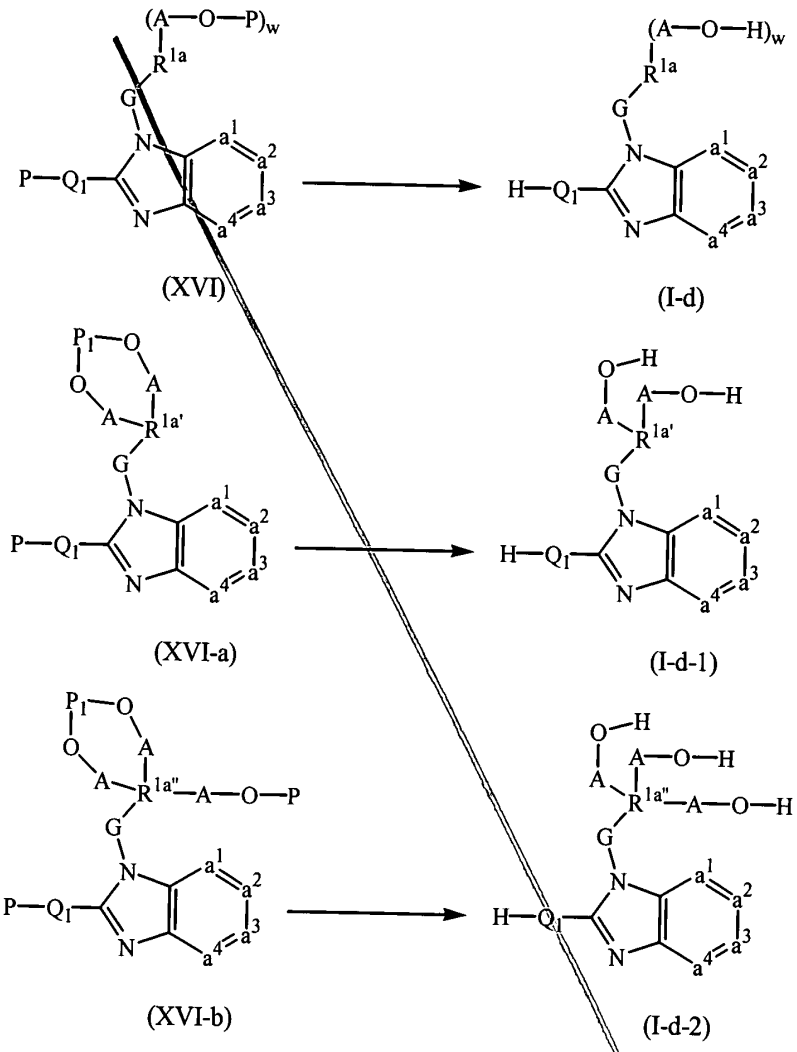
m) reducing an intermediate of formula (XV)



(XV) (I-c-1)

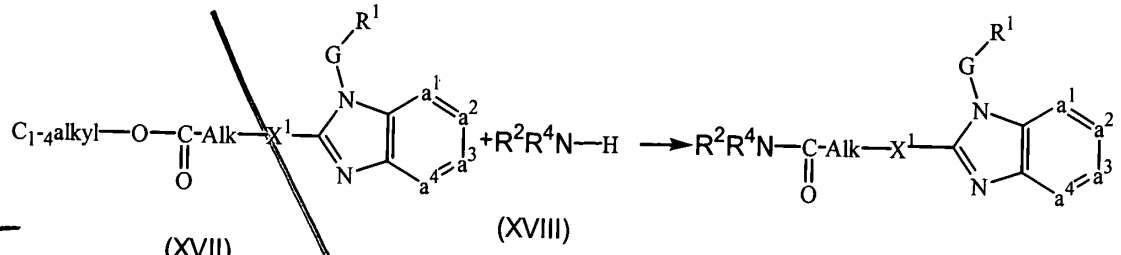
with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $(R^6)_2N$-[(C_{1-9}alkyl)CH_2OH]-NH-HQ_5 being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that R^2 is other than hydrogen and is represented by C_{1-10}alkyl substituted with $N(R_6)_2$ and with hydroxy, and the carbon atom carrying the hydroxy, carries also two hydrogen atoms, and provided that R^4 is hydrogen, and the carbon atom adjacent to the nitrogen atom carrying the R^2 and R^4 substituents, carries also at least one hydrogen atom, with a ~~suitable~~ reducing agent;

n) deprotecting an intermediate of formula (XVI), (XVI-a) or (XVI-b)



with G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $H-Q_1$ being defined as Q according to claim 1 provided that R^2 or at least one R^6 substituent is hydrogen, and R^{1a}-(A-O-H)$_w$, $R^{1a'}$-(A-O-H)$_2$ and $R^{1a''}$-(A-O-H)$_3$ being defined as R^1 according to claim 1 provided that R^1 is substituted with hydroxy, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkyl, or $HO(-CH_2-CH_2-O)_n-$, with w being an integer from 1 to 4 and P or P_1 being a ~~suitable~~ protecting group, with a suitable acid;

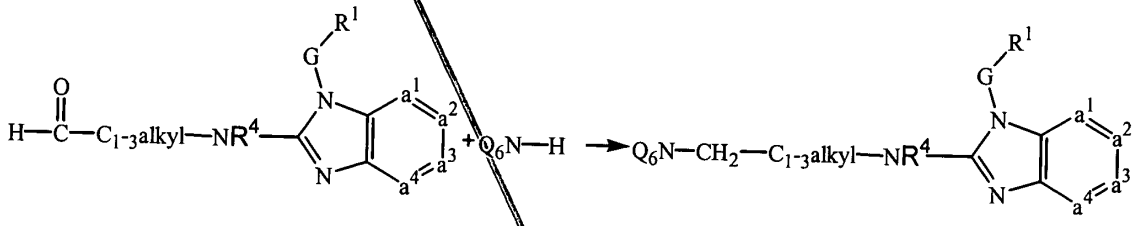
o) amination of an intermediate of formula (XVII)



(XVII) (XVIII) (I-e)

with R^1, G, $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$, Alk, X^1 R^2 and R^4 defined as in claim 1, in the presence of ~~a suitable~~ amination agent;

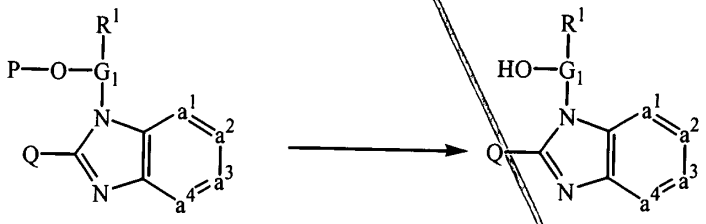
p) amination of an intermediate of formula (XIX)



(XIX) (XX) (I-p)

with R^1, G, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $Q_6N-CH_2-C_{1-3}alkyl-NR^4$ beingdefined as Q according to claim 1 provided that in the definition of Q, X^2 is $C_{2-4}alkyl-NR^4$, in the presence of ~~a suitable~~ <u>an</u> amination agent;

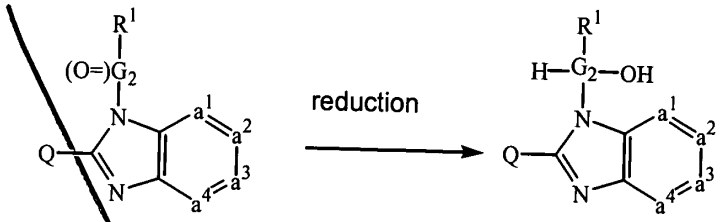
q) deprotecting an intermediate of formula (XXI)



(XXI) (I-q)

with R^1, Q, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $HO-G_1$ being defined as G according to claim 1 provided that G is substituted with hydroxy or $HO-(CH_2CH_2O-)_n$; <u>and</u>

r) reducing an intermediate of formula (XXII)



(XXII) (I-q-1)

with R^1, Q, and $-a^1=a^2-a^3=a^4-$ defined as in claim 1, and $H-G_2-OH$ being defined as G according to claim 1 provided that G is substituted with hydroxy and the carbon atom carrying the hydroxy substituent carries also at least one hydrogen, in the presence of a ~~suitable~~ reducing agent.

16. *(previously amended)* A product, comprising:

(a) a first compound as claimed in claim 1; and

(b) a second antiviral compound,

wherein said first compound and said second compound are simultaneously, separately or sequentially used in the treatment or the prevention of viral infections.

17. *(previously amended)* A pharmaceutical composition, comprising:

(a) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier; and

(b) as active ingredients:

i. a first compound as claimed in claim 1; and

ii. a second antiviral compound.

18. *(previously added)* The process of claim 15, further comprising the step of converting compound of formula (I'), stereochemically isomeric forms, metal complexes, quaternary amines or *N*-oxide forms thereof, into a therapeutically active non-toxic acid addition salt by treatment with an acid.

19. *(previously added)* The process of claim 15, further comprising the step of converting compound of formula (I'), stereochemically isomeric forms, metal complexes, quaternary amines or *N*-oxide forms thereof, into a therapeutically active non-toxic base addition salt by treatment with alkali.

20. *(previously added)* The process of claim 15, further comprising the step of converting the acid addition salt form of compound of formula (I'), stereochemically isomeric forms, metal complexes, quaternary amines or *N*-oxide forms thereof, into the free base by treatment with alkali.

21. *(previously added)* The process of claim 15, further comprising the step of converting the base addition salt form of compound of formula (I'), stereochemically isomeric forms, metal complexes, quaternary amines or *N*-oxide forms thereof, into the free acid by treatment with acid.

22. *(new)* The process of claim 15, further comprising the step of converting said compound of formula (I'), stereochemically isomeric form, metal complex, quaternary amine or *N*-oxide form thereof, into a different form of compound of formula (I'), stereochemically isomeric form, metal complex, quaternary amine or *N*-oxide form thereof.